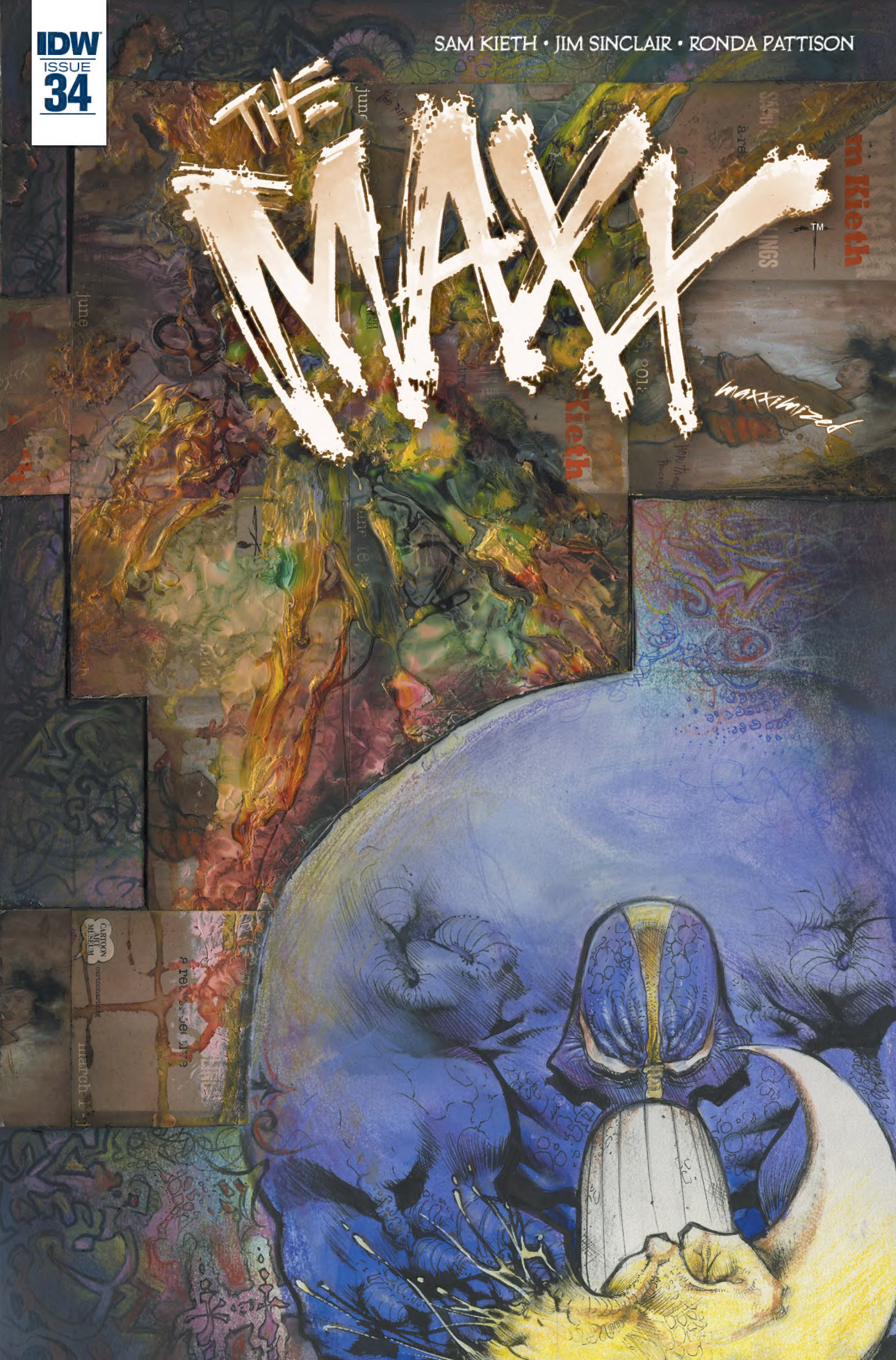
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34
SAM KIETH • JIM SINCLAIR • RONDA PATTISON
THE MAXX
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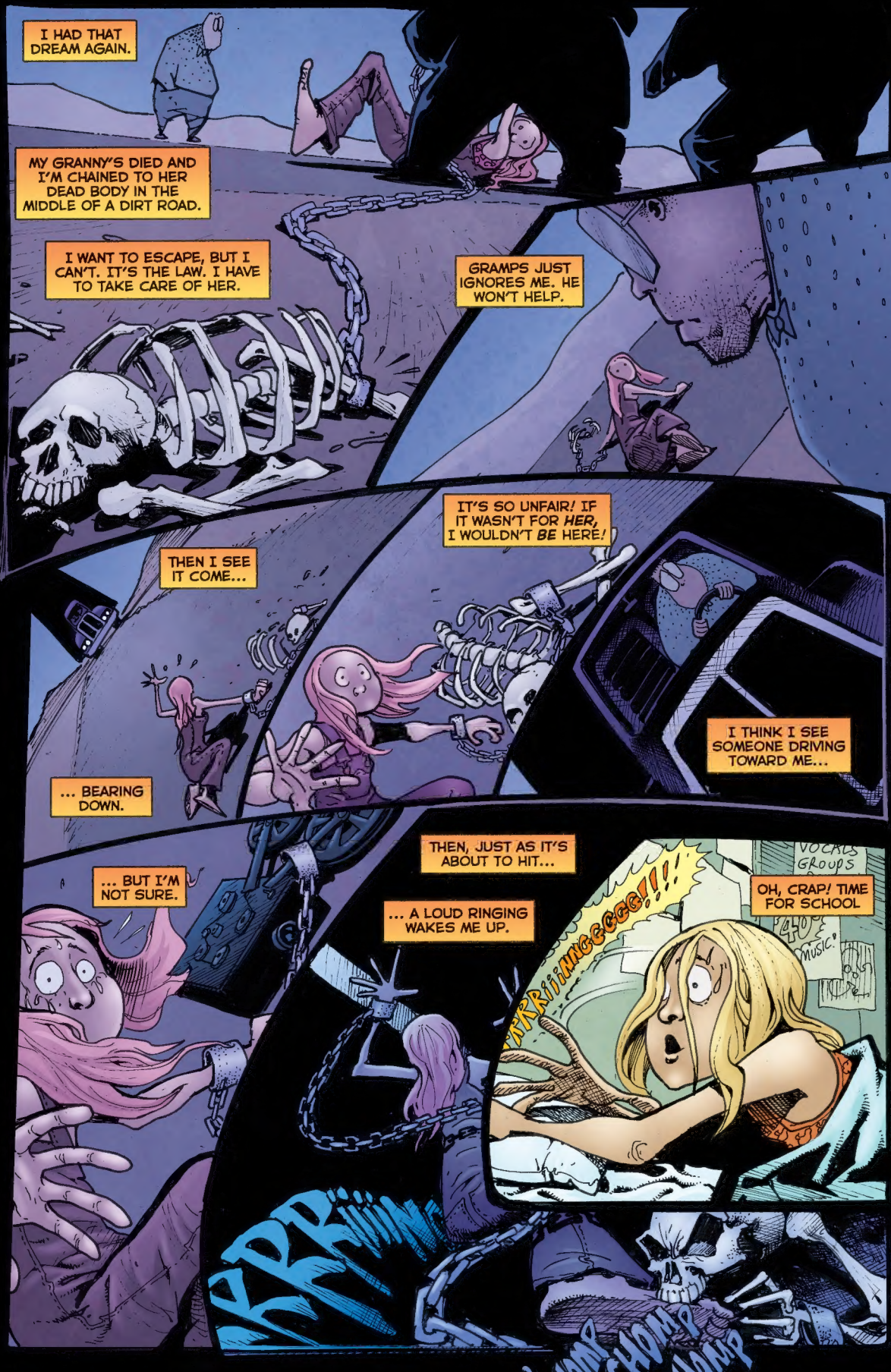
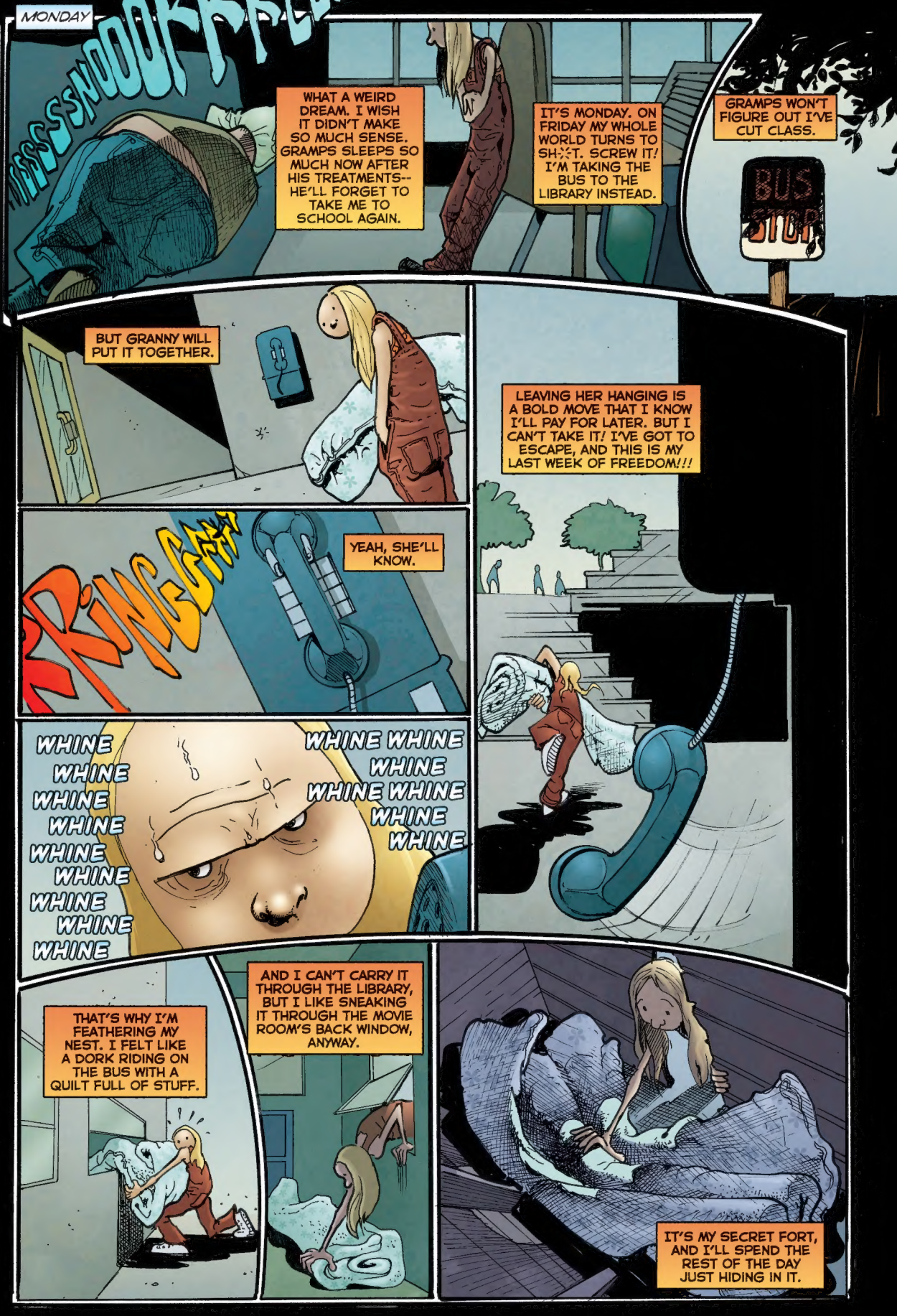
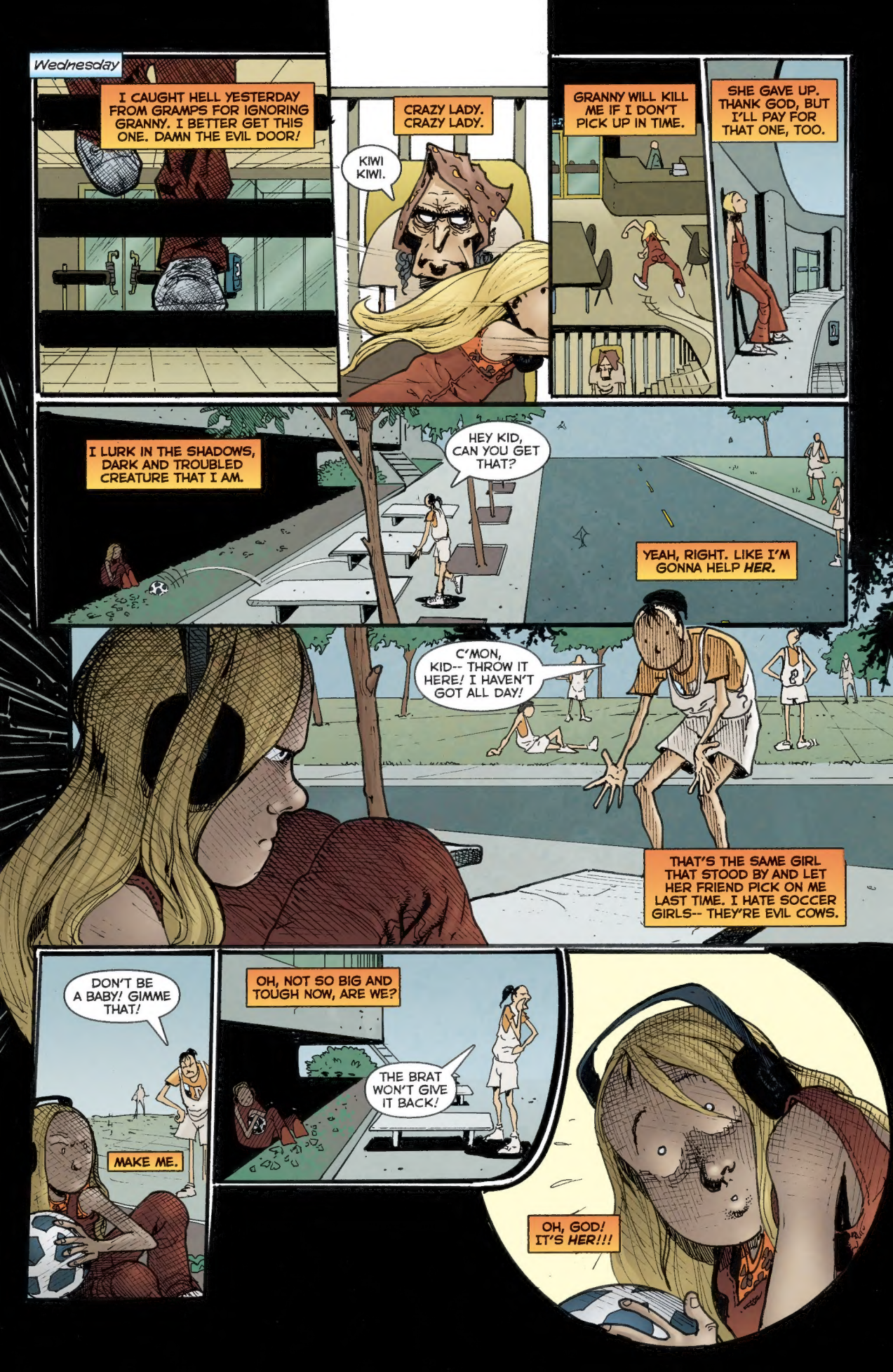
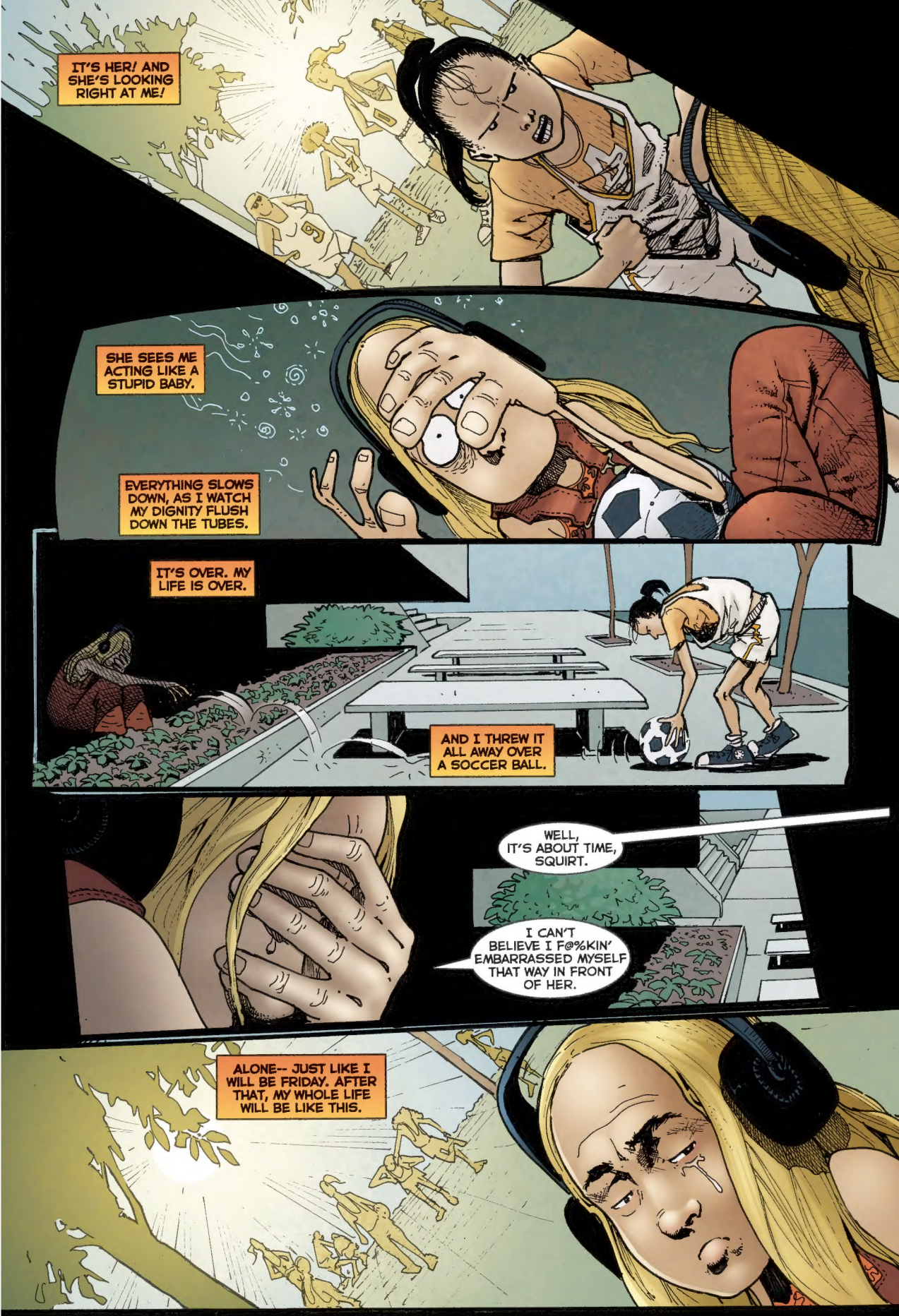
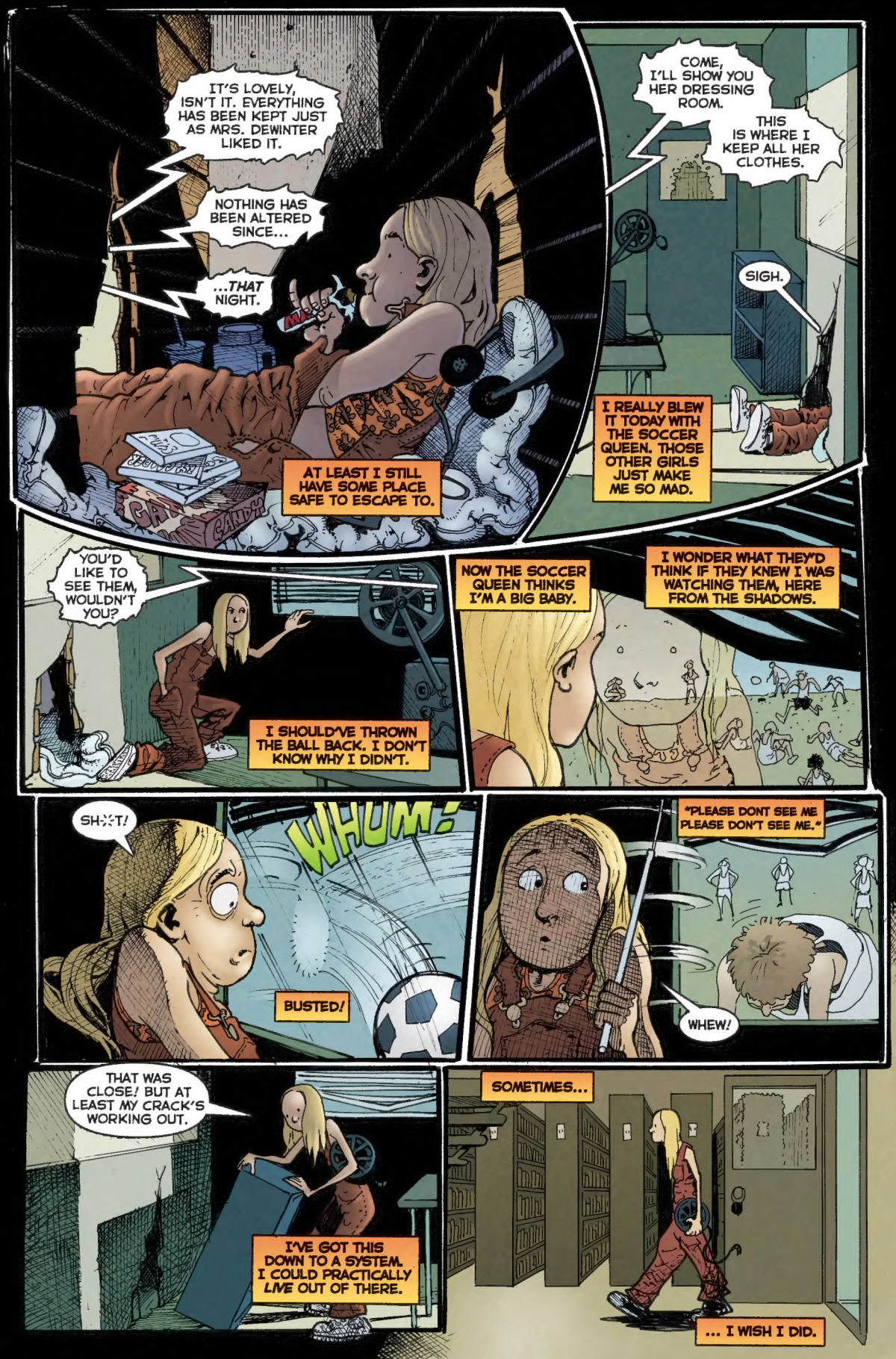

I HAD THAT DREAM AGAIN.
MY GRANNY'S DIED AND I'M CHAINED TO HER DEAD BODY IN THE MIDDLE OF A DIRT ROAD.
I WANT TO ESCAPE, BUT I CAN'T. IT'S THE LAW. I HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF HER.
GRAMPS JUST IGNORES ME. HE WON'T HELP.
IT'S SO UNFAIR! IF IT WASN'T FOR HER, I WOULDN'T BE HERE!
THEN I SEE IT COME...
I THINK I SEE SOMEONE DRIVING TOWARD ME...
... BEARING DOWN.
... BUT I'M NOT SURE.
THEN, JUST AS IT'S ABOUT TO HIT...
... A LOUD RINGING WAKES ME UP.
OH, CRAP! TIME FOR SCHOOL
KRRiiiNGGGG!!!
KRRiiiNG
CHOMP
CHOMP
CHOMP
CHOMP

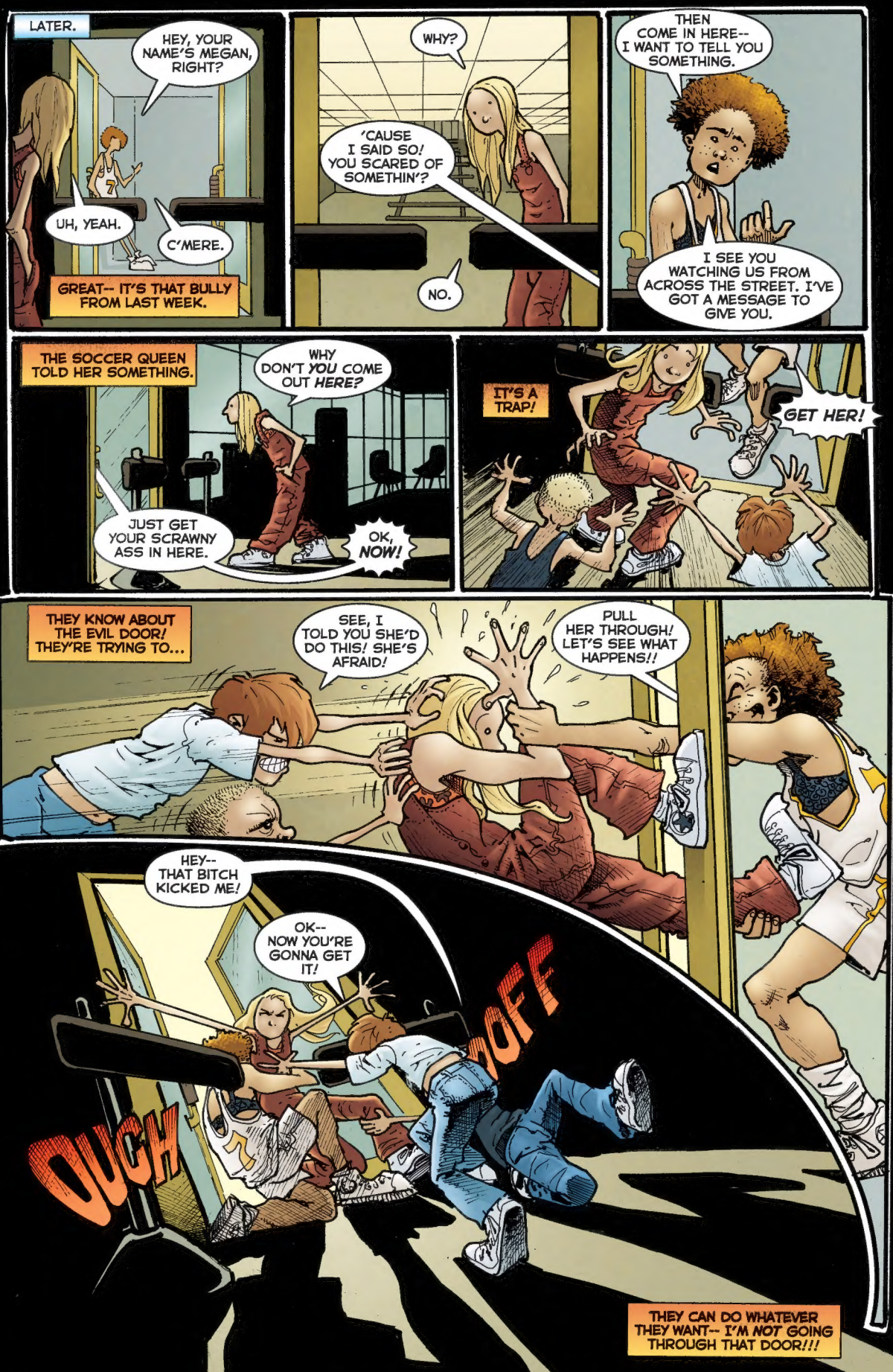

MONDAY
SSSNOOORRRRRR
WHAT A WEIRD DREAM. I WISH IT DIDN'T MAKE SO MUCH SENSE. GRAMPS SLEEPS SO MUCH NOW AFTER HIS TREATMENTS--HE'LL FORGET TO TAKE ME TO SCHOOL AGAIN.
IT'S MONDAY. ON FRIDAY MY WHOLE WORLD TURNS TO SH*T. SCREW IT! I'M TAKING THE BUS TO THE LIBRARY INSTEAD.
GRAMPS WON'T FIGURE OUT I'VE CUT CLASS.
BUS STOP
BUT GRANNY WILL PUT IT TOGETHER.
LEAVING HER HANGING IS A BOLD MOVE THAT I KNOW I'LL PAY FOR LATER. BUT I CAN'T TAKE IT! I'VE GOT TO ESCAPE, AND THIS IS MY LAST WEEK OF FREEDOM!!!
RRINGGGG
YEAH, SHE'LL KNOW.
WHINE WHINE WHINE WHINE WHINE WHINE WHINE WHINE WHINE WHINE WHINE WHINE WHINE WHINE WHINE WHINE
THAT'S WHY I'M FEATHERING MY NEST. I FELT LIKE A DORK RIDING ON THE BUS WITH A QUILT FULL OF STUFF.
AND I CAN'T CARRY IT THROUGH THE LIBRARY, BUT I LIKE SNEAKING IT THROUGH THE MOVIE ROOM'S BACK WINDOW, ANYWAY.
IT'S MY SECRET FORT, AND I'LL SPEND THE REST OF THE DAY JUST HIDING IN IT.

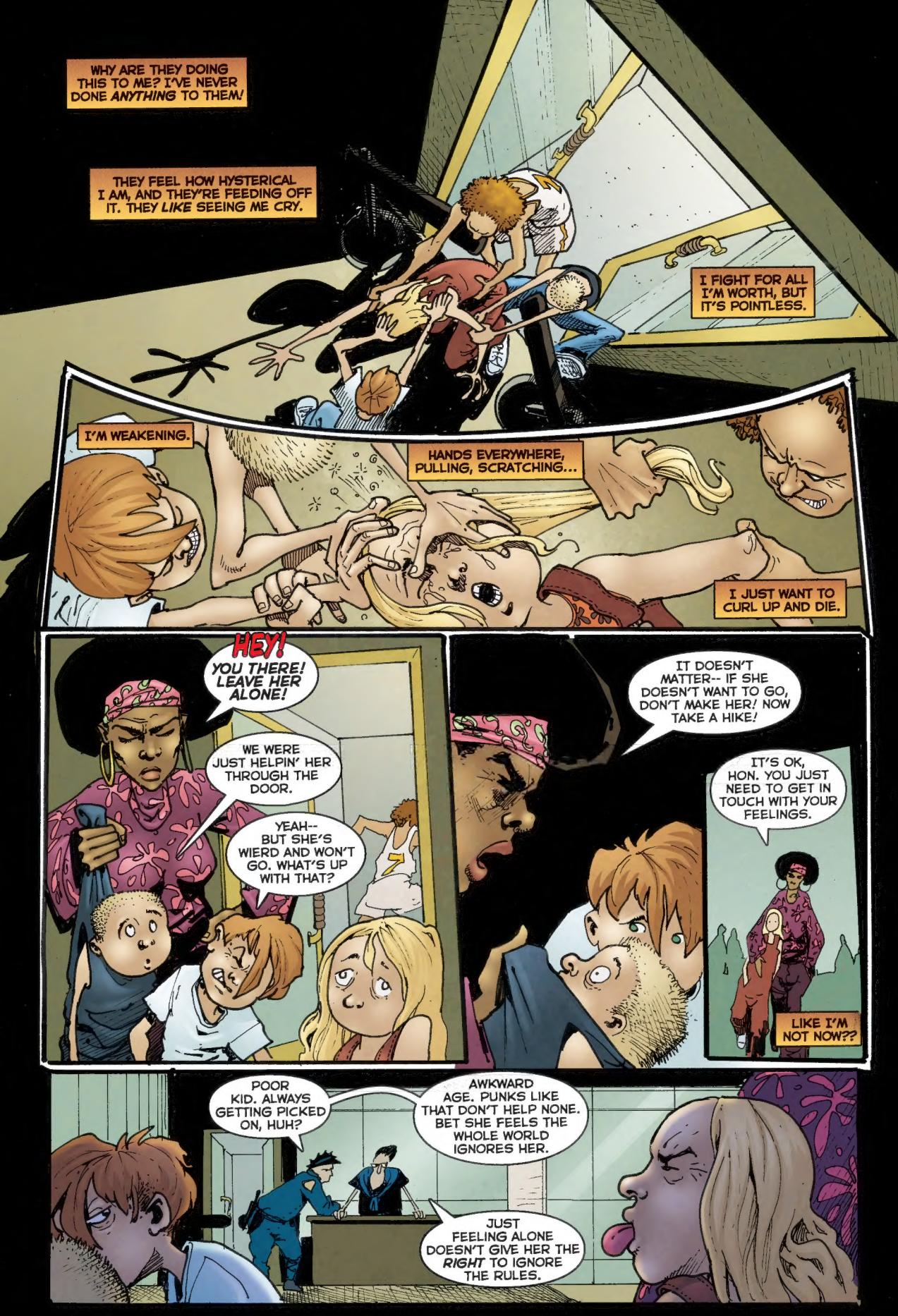
TUESDAY
YOU SURE? WHAT IF SHE BEATS ME UP?
JUST POUR IT. SHE WONT DO NOTHIN', WILL YA?
YOU SURE?
GO FOR IT!
ROOT BEER IS SO STICKY! PAPER TOWELS DON'T WORK WORTH CRAP. GREAT! NOW MY HAIR'S SOAKED WITH WATER, TOO.
I DON'T KNOW WHO I HATE MORE, THEM...
... OR MYSELF FOR *LETTING* THEM.
I COME OUT, LOADED FOR BEAR...
SLAM
... TOO LATE TO DO ANY GOOD.
AS USUAL, I WOULDN'T CONFRONT THEM. *INSTEAD*, I DUG OUT AN OLD PLAYBOY I FOUND...
... AND SNUCK A COPY INTO THEIR SCHOOL BOOKS...
... THEN WATCHED FROM A SAFE DISTANCE...
... AS ALL HELL BROKE LOOSE...
... WHEN THEIR MOMMY FOUND IT.
THAT GIRL'S GONNA PAY! YOU STILL GOT HER HISTORY BOOK?
YEAH, IT'S RIGHT HERE, BUT--
SHHH. WATCH AND LEARN.
PLAYBOY

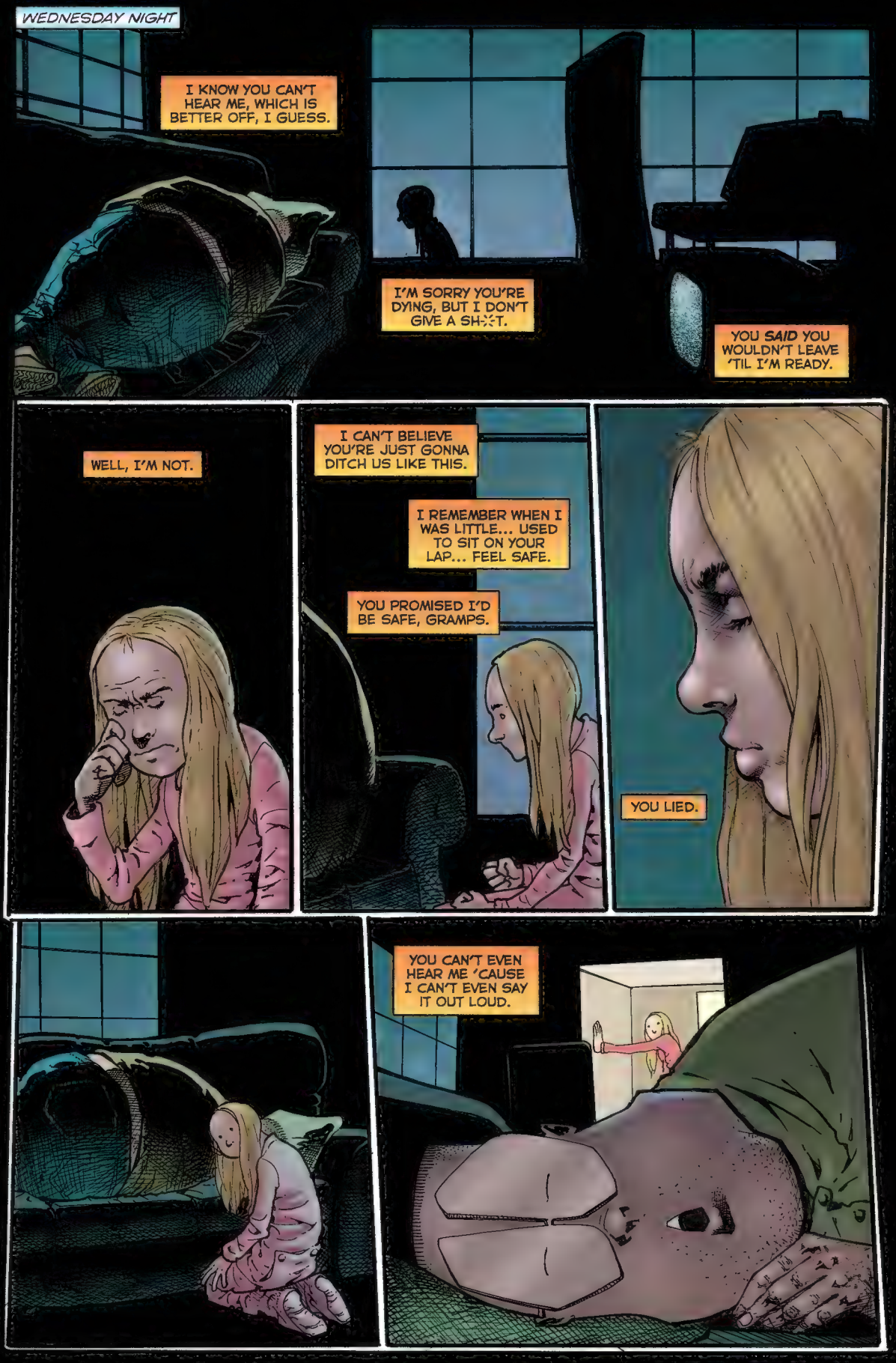

Wednesday
I CAUGHT HELL YESTERDAY FROM GRAMPS FOR IGNORING GRANNY. I BETTER GET THIS ONE. DAMN THE EVIL DOOR!
CRAZY LADY. CRAZY LADY.
KIWI KIWI.
GRANNY WILL KILL ME IF I DON'T PICK UP IN TIME.
SHE GAVE UP. THANK GOD, BUT I'LL PAY FOR THAT ONE, TOO.
I LURK IN THE SHADOWS, DARK AND TROUBLED CREATURE THAT I AM.
HEY KID, CAN YOU GET THAT?
YEAH, RIGHT. LIKE I'M GONNA HELP HER.
C'MON, KID-- THROW IT HERE! I HAVEN'T GOT ALL DAY!
THAT'S THE SAME GIRL THAT STOOD BY AND LET HER FRIEND PICK ON ME LAST TIME. I HATE SOCCER GIRLS-- THEY'RE EVIL COWS.
DON'T BE A BABY! GIMME THAT!
MAKE ME.
OH, NOT SO BIG AND TOUGH NOW, ARE WE?
THE BRAT WON'T GIVE IT BACK!
OH, GOD! IT'S HER!!!

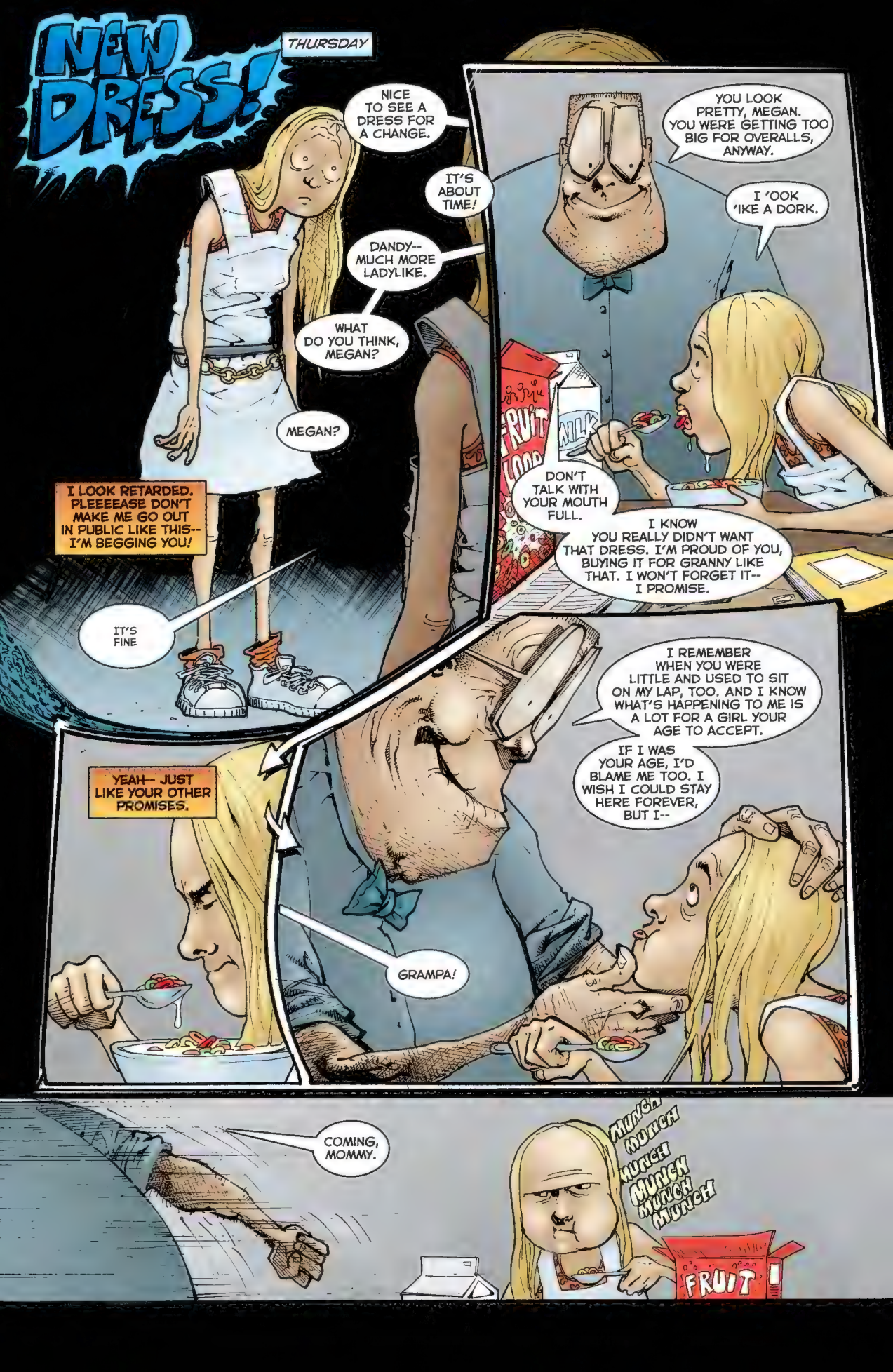

IT'S HER! AND SHE'S LOOKING RIGHT AT ME!
SHE SEES ME ACTING LIKE A STUPID BABY.
EVERYTHING SLOWS DOWN, AS I WATCH MY DIGNITY FLUSH DOWN THE TUBES.
IT'S OVER. MY LIFE IS OVER.
AND I THREW IT ALL AWAY OVER A SOCCER BALL.
WELL, IT'S ABOUT TIME, SQUIRT.
I CAN'T BELIEVE I F@%KIN' EMBARRASSED MYSELF THAT WAY IN FRONT OF HER.
ALONE-- JUST LIKE I WILL BE FRIDAY. AFTER THAT, MY WHOLE LIFE WILL BE LIKE THIS.

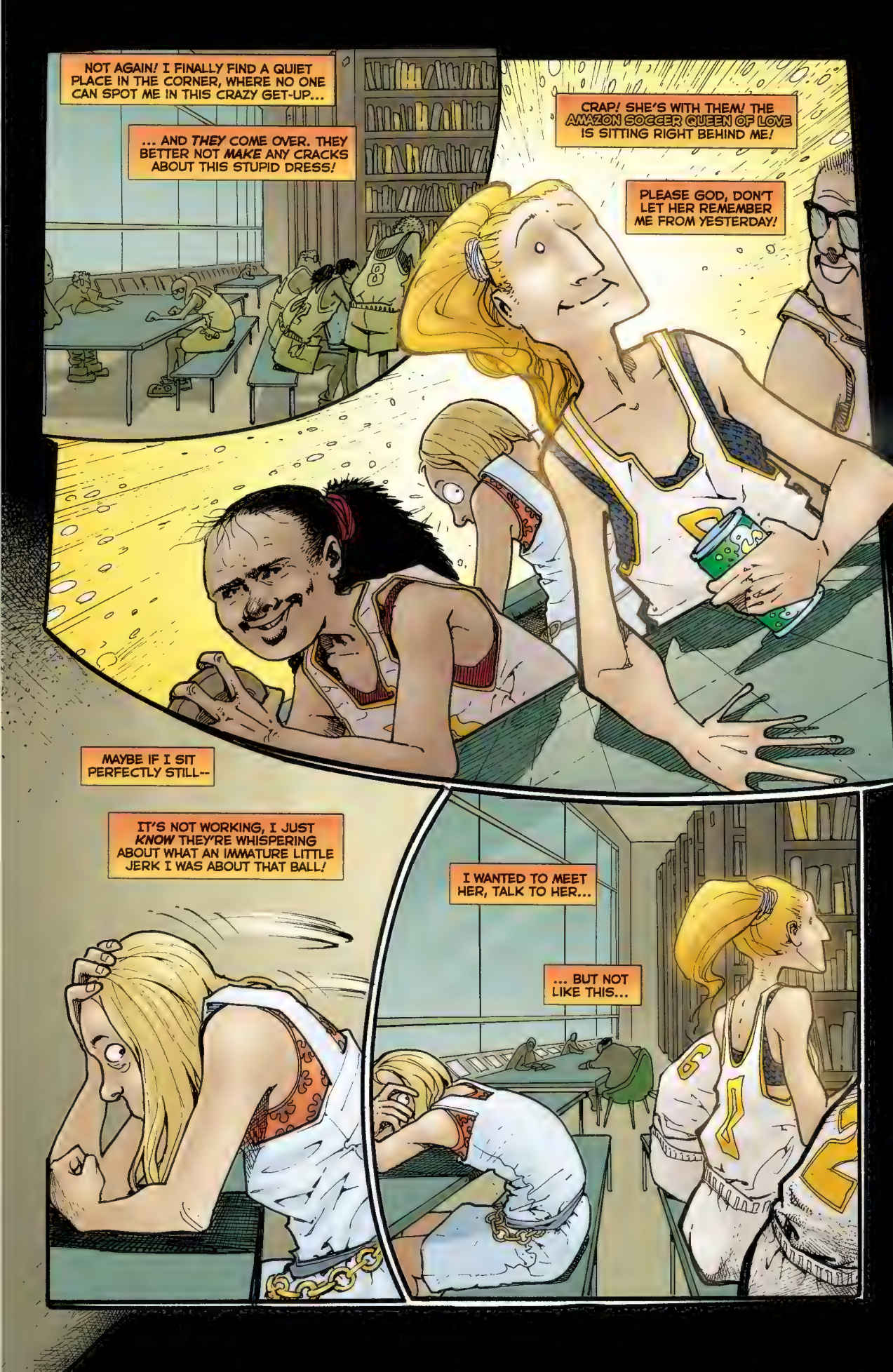

IT'S LOVELY, ISN'T IT. EVERYTHING HAS BEEN KEPT JUST AS MRS. DEWINTER LIKED IT.
NOTHING HAS BEEN ALTERED SINCE...
...THAT NIGHT.
AT LEAST I STILL HAVE SOME PLACE SAFE TO ESCAPE TO.
COME, I'LL SHOW YOU HER DRESSING ROOM.
THIS IS WHERE I KEEP ALL HER CLOTHES.
SIGH.
I REALLY BLEW IT TODAY WITH THE SOCCER QUEEN. THOSE OTHER GIRLS JUST MAKE ME SO MAD.
YOU'D LIKE TO SEE THEM, WOULDN'T YOU?
I SHOULD'VE THROWN THE BALL BACK. I DON'T KNOW WHY I DIDN'T.
NOW THE SOCCER QUEEN THINKS I'M A BIG BABY.
I WONDER WHAT THEY'D THINK IF THEY KNEW I WAS WATCHING THEM, HERE FROM THE SHADOWS.
SH☆T!
WHUM!
BUSTED!
"PLEASE DONT SEE ME PLEASE DON'T SEE ME."
WHEW!
THAT WAS CLOSE! BUT AT LEAST MY CRACK'S WORKING OUT.
I'VE GOT THIS DOWN TO A SYSTEM. I COULD PRACTICALLY LIVE OUT OF THERE.
SOMETIMES...
... I WISH I DID.

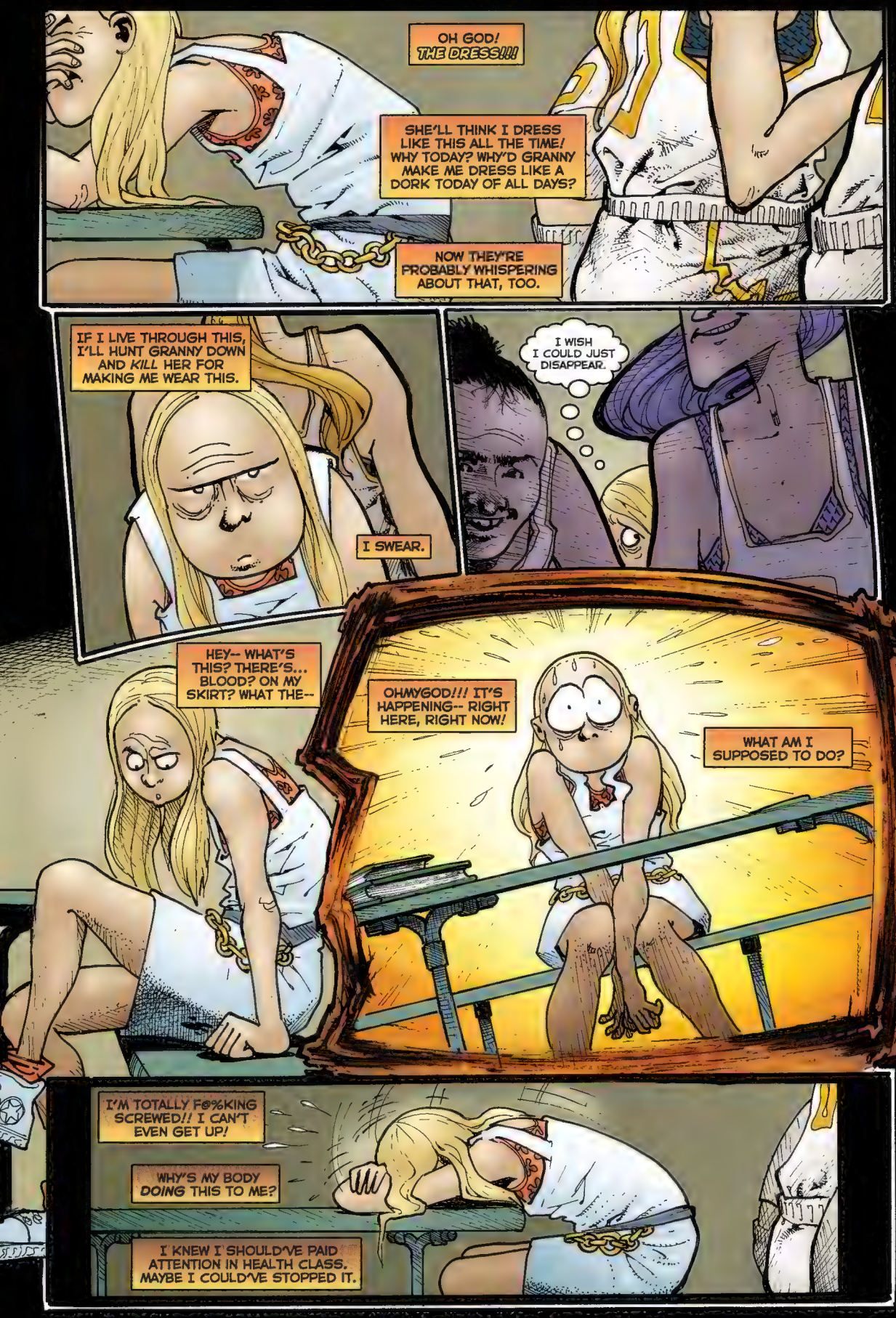

LATER.
HEY, YOUR NAME'S MEGAN, RIGHT?
UH, YEAH.
C'MERE.
GREAT-- IT'S THAT BULLY FROM LAST WEEK.
WHY?
'CAUSE I SAID SO! YOU SCARED OF SOMETHIN'?
NO.
THEN COME IN HERE-- I WANT TO TELL YOU SOMETHING.
I SEE YOU WATCHING US FROM ACROSS THE STREET. I'VE GOT A MESSAGE TO GIVE YOU.
THE SOCCER QUEEN TOLD HER SOMETHING.
WHY DON'T YOU COME OUT HERE?
JUST GET YOUR SCRAWNY ASS IN HERE.
OK, NOW!
IT'S A TRAP!
GET HER!
THEY KNOW ABOUT THE EVIL DOOR! THEY'RE TRYING TO...
SEE, I TOLD YOU SHE'D DO THIS! SHE'S AFRAID!
PULL HER THROUGH! LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS!!
HEY-- THAT BITCH KICKED ME!
OK-- NOW YOU'RE GONNA GET IT!
OUCH
OFF
THEY CAN DO WHATEVER THEY WANT-- I'M NOT GOING THROUGH THAT DOOR!!!

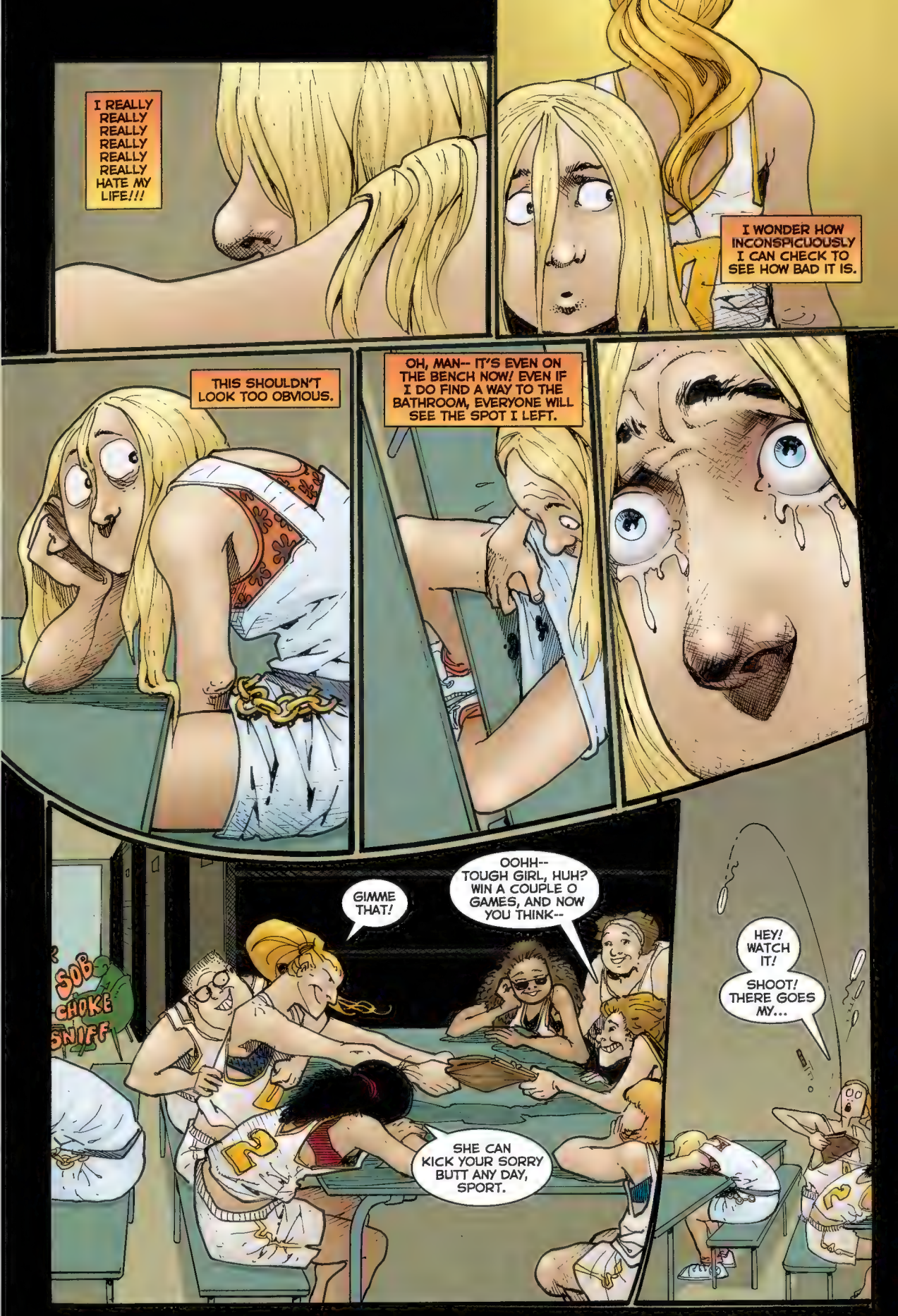

WHY ARE THEY DOING THIS TO ME? I'VE NEVER DONE ANYTHING TO THEM!
THEY FEEL HOW HYSTERICAL I AM, AND THEY'RE FEEDING OFF IT. THEY LIKE SEEING ME CRY.
I FIGHT FOR ALL I'M WORTH, BUT IT'S POINTLESS.
I'M WEAKENING.
HANDS EVERYWHERE, PULLING, SCRATCHING...
I JUST WANT TO CURL UP AND DIE.
HEY! YOU THERE! LEAVE HER ALONE!
WE WERE JUST HELPIN' HER THROUGH THE DOOR.
YEAH-- BUT SHE'S WIERD AND WON'T GO. WHAT'S UP WITH THAT?
IT DOESN'T MATTER-- IF SHE DOESN'T WANT TO GO, DON'T MAKE HER! NOW TAKE A HIKE!
IT'S OK, HON. YOU JUST NEED TO GET IN TOUCH WITH YOUR FEELINGS.
LIKE I'M NOT NOW??
POOR KID. ALWAYS GETTING PICKED ON, HUH?
AWKWARD AGE. PUNKS LIKE THAT DON'T HELP NONE. BET SHE FEELS THE WHOLE WORLD IGNORES HER.
JUST FEELING ALONE DOESN'T GIVE HER THE RIGHT TO IGNORE THE RULES.

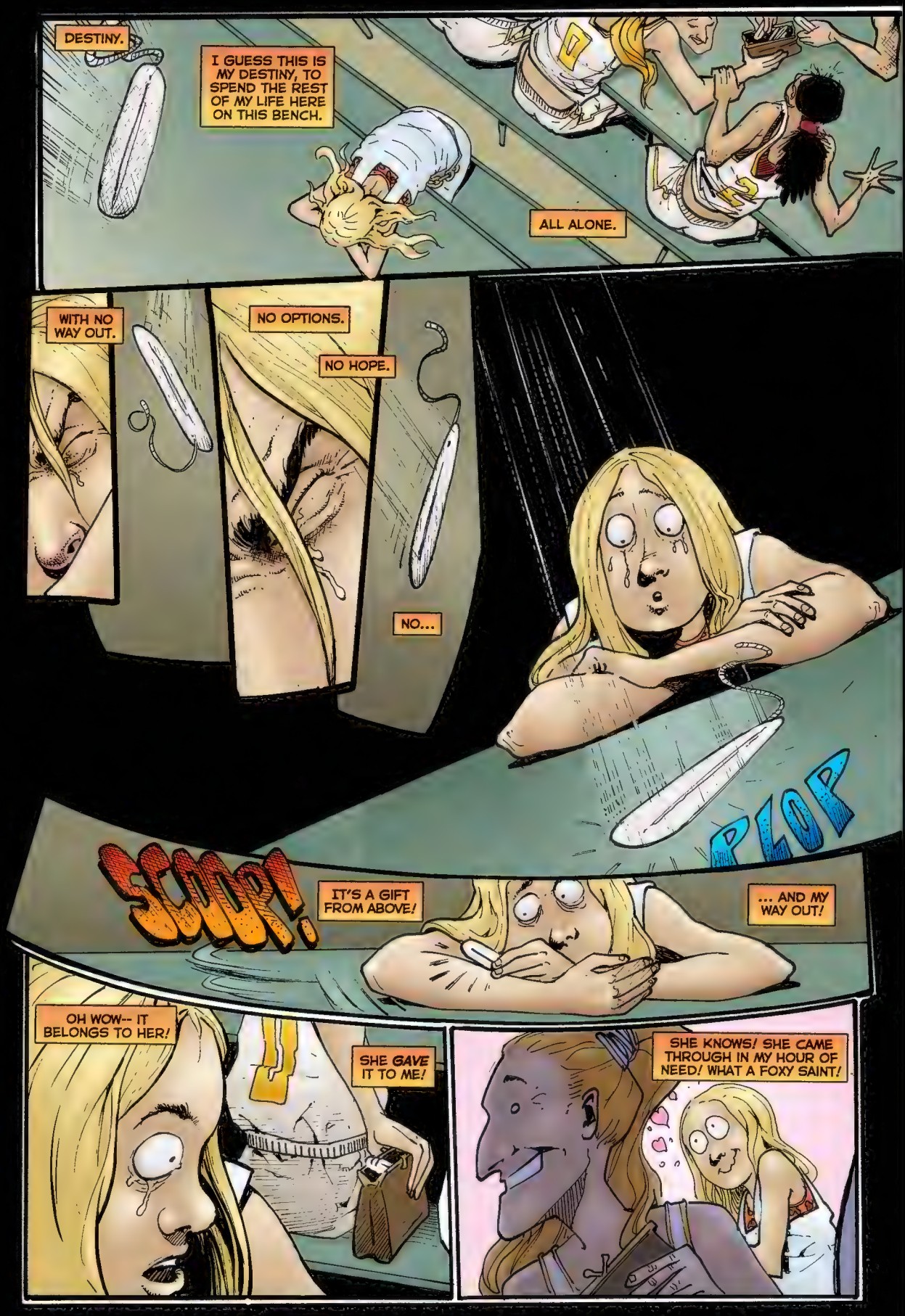

WEDNESDAY NIGHT
I KNOW YOU CAN'T HEAR ME, WHICH IS BETTER OFF, I GUESS.
I'M SORRY YOU'RE DYING, BUT I DON'T GIVE A SH*T.
YOU *SAID* YOU WOULDN'T LEAVE 'TIL I'M READY.
WELL, I'M NOT.
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE JUST GONNA DITCH US LIKE THIS.
I REMEMBER WHEN I WAS LITTLE... USED TO SIT ON YOUR LAP... FEEL SAFE.
YOU PROMISED I'D BE SAFE, GRAMPS.
YOU LIED.
YOU CAN'T EVEN HEAR ME 'CAUSE I CAN'T EVEN SAY IT OUT LOUD.

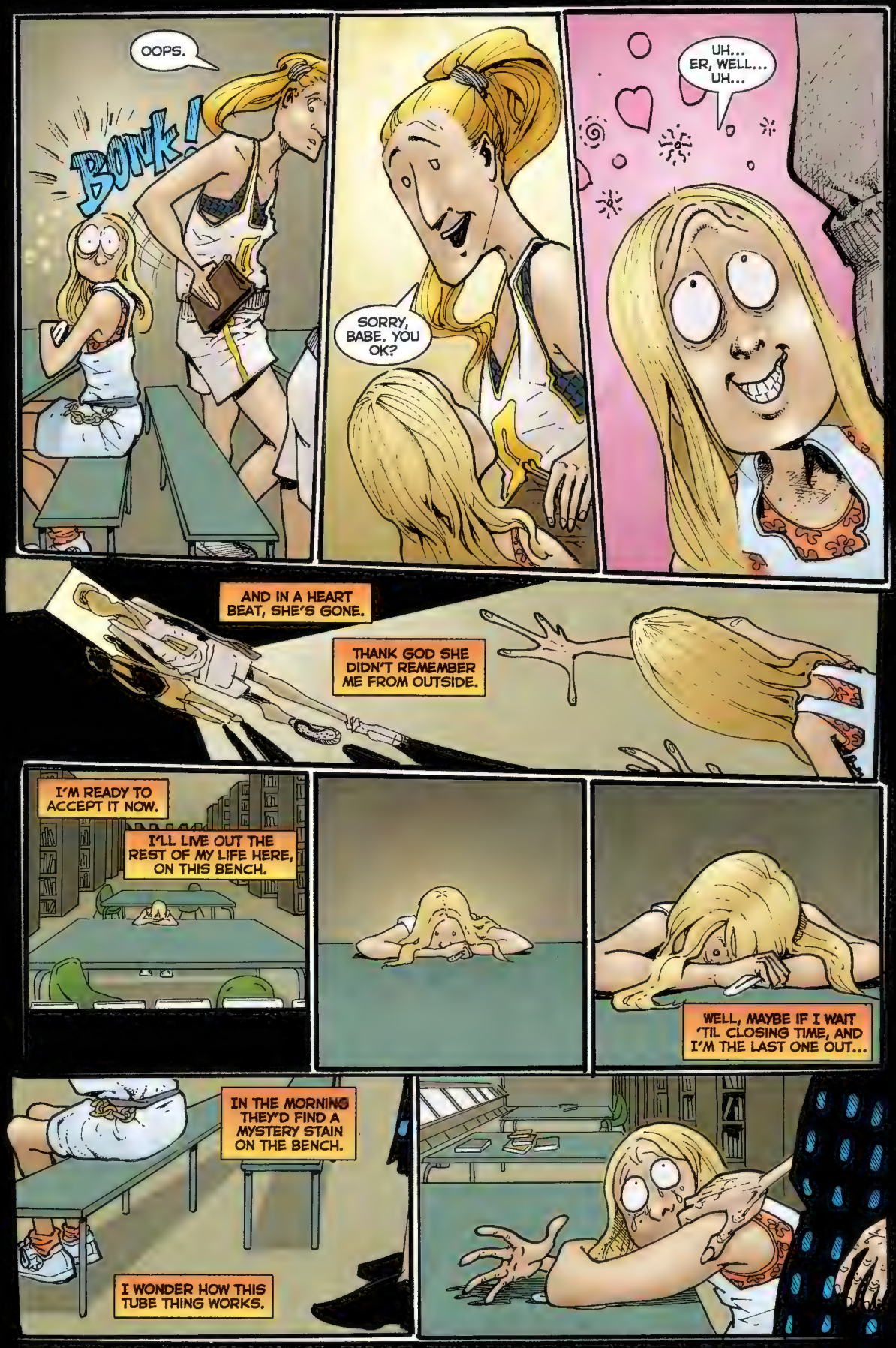

NEW DRESS!
THURSDAY
NICE TO SEE A DRESS FOR A CHANGE.
IT'S ABOUT TIME!
DANDY-- MUCH MORE LADYLIKE.
WHAT DO YOU THINK, MEGAN?
MEGAN?
I LOOK RETARDED. PLEEEEASE DON'T MAKE ME GO OUT IN PUBLIC LIKE THIS-- I'M BEGGING YOU!
IT'S FINE
YOU LOOK PRETTY, MEGAN. YOU WERE GETTING TOO BIG FOR OVERALLS, ANYWAY.
I 'OOK 'IKE A DORK.
DON'T TALK WITH YOUR MOUTH FULL.
I KNOW YOU REALLY DIDN'T WANT THAT DRESS. I'M PROUD OF YOU, BUYING IT FOR GRANNY LIKE THAT. I WON'T FORGET IT-- I PROMISE.
I REMEMBER WHEN YOU WERE LITTLE AND USED TO SIT ON MY LAP, TOO. AND I KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME IS A LOT FOR A GIRL YOUR AGE TO ACCEPT.
IF I WAS YOUR AGE, I'D BLAME ME TOO. I WISH I COULD STAY HERE FOREVER, BUT I--
YEAH-- JUST LIKE YOUR OTHER PROMISES.
GRAMPA!
COMING, MOMMY.
MUNCH MUNCH MUNCH MUNCH MUNCH MUNCH
FRUIT

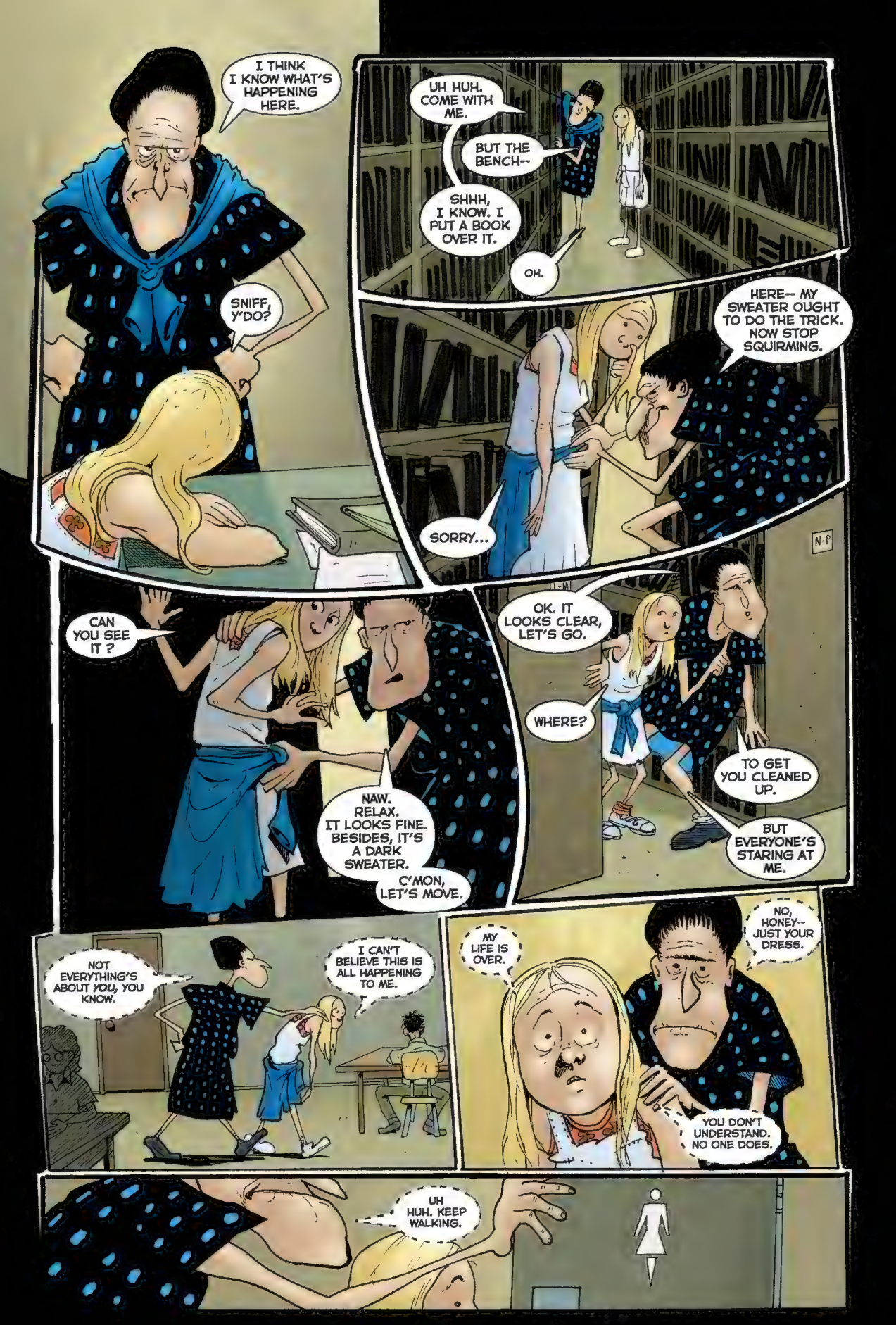

NOT AGAIN! I FINALLY FIND A QUIET PLACE IN THE CORNER, WHERE NO ONE CAN SPOT ME IN THIS CRAZY GET-UP...
... AND THEY COME OVER. THEY BETTER NOT MAKE ANY CRACKS ABOUT THIS STUPID DRESS!
CRAP! SHE'S WITH THEM! THE AMAZON SOCCER QUEEN OF LOVE IS SITTING RIGHT BEHIND ME!
PLEASE GOD, DON'T LET HER REMEMBER ME FROM YESTERDAY!
MAYBE IF I SIT PERFECTLY STILL--
IT'S NOT WORKING, I JUST KNOW THEY'RE WHISPERING ABOUT WHAT AN IMMATURE LITTLE JERK I WAS ABOUT THAT BALL!
I WANTED TO MEET HER, TALK TO HER...
... BUT NOT LIKE THIS...

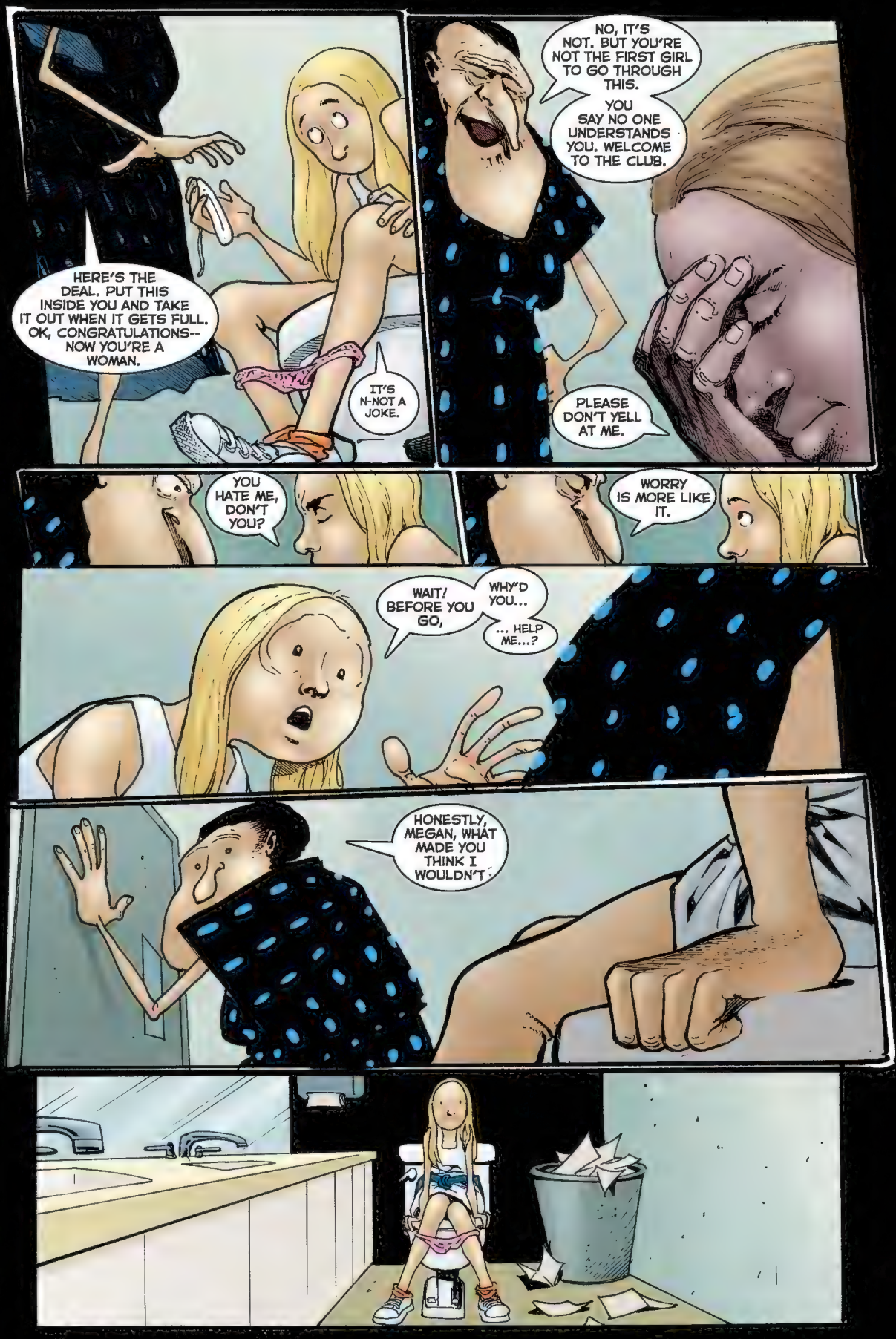

OH GOD! THE DRESS!!!
SHE'LL THINK I DRESS LIKE THIS ALL THE TIME! WHY TODAY? WHY'D GRANNY MAKE ME DRESS LIKE A DORK TODAY OF ALL DAYS?
NOW THEY'RE PROBABLY WHISPERING ABOUT THAT, TOO.
IF I LIVE THROUGH THIS, I'LL HUNT GRANNY DOWN AND KILL HER FOR MAKING ME WEAR THIS.
I SWEAR.
I WISH I COULD JUST DISAPPEAR.
HEY-- WHAT'S THIS? THERE'S... BLOOD? ON MY SKIRT? WHAT THE--
OHMYGOD!!! IT'S HAPPENING-- RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW!
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?
I'M TOTALLY F@%KING SCREWED!! I CAN'T EVEN GET UP!
WHY'S MY BODY DOING THIS TO ME?
I KNEW I SHOULD'VE PAID ATTENTION IN HEALTH CLASS. MAYBE I COULD'VE STOPPED IT.

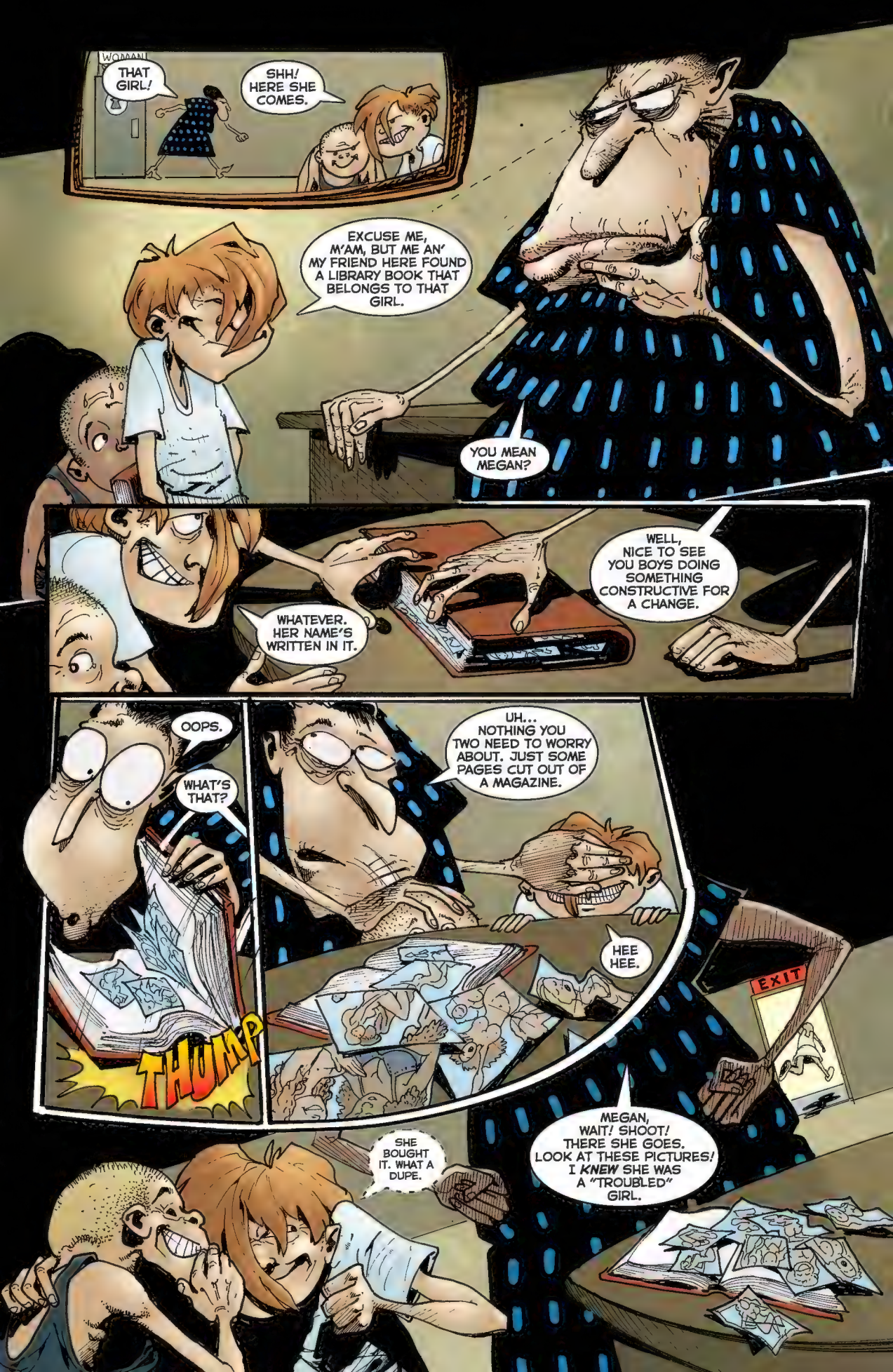

I REALLY REALLY REALLY REALLY REALLY REALLY HATE MY LIFE!!!
I WONDER HOW INCONSPICUOUSLY I CAN CHECK TO SEE HOW BAD IT IS.
THIS SHOULDN'T LOOK TOO OBVIOUS.
OH, MAN-- IT'S EVEN ON THE BENCH NOW! EVEN IF I DO FIND A WAY TO THE BATHROOM, EVERYONE WILL SEE THE SPOT I LEFT.
SOB
CHOKE
SNIFF
GIMME THAT!
OOHH-- TOUGH GIRL, HUH? WIN A COUPLE O GAMES, AND NOW YOU THINK--
SHE CAN KICK YOUR SORRY BUTT ANY DAY, SPORT.
HEY! WATCH IT!
SHOOT! THERE GOES MY...

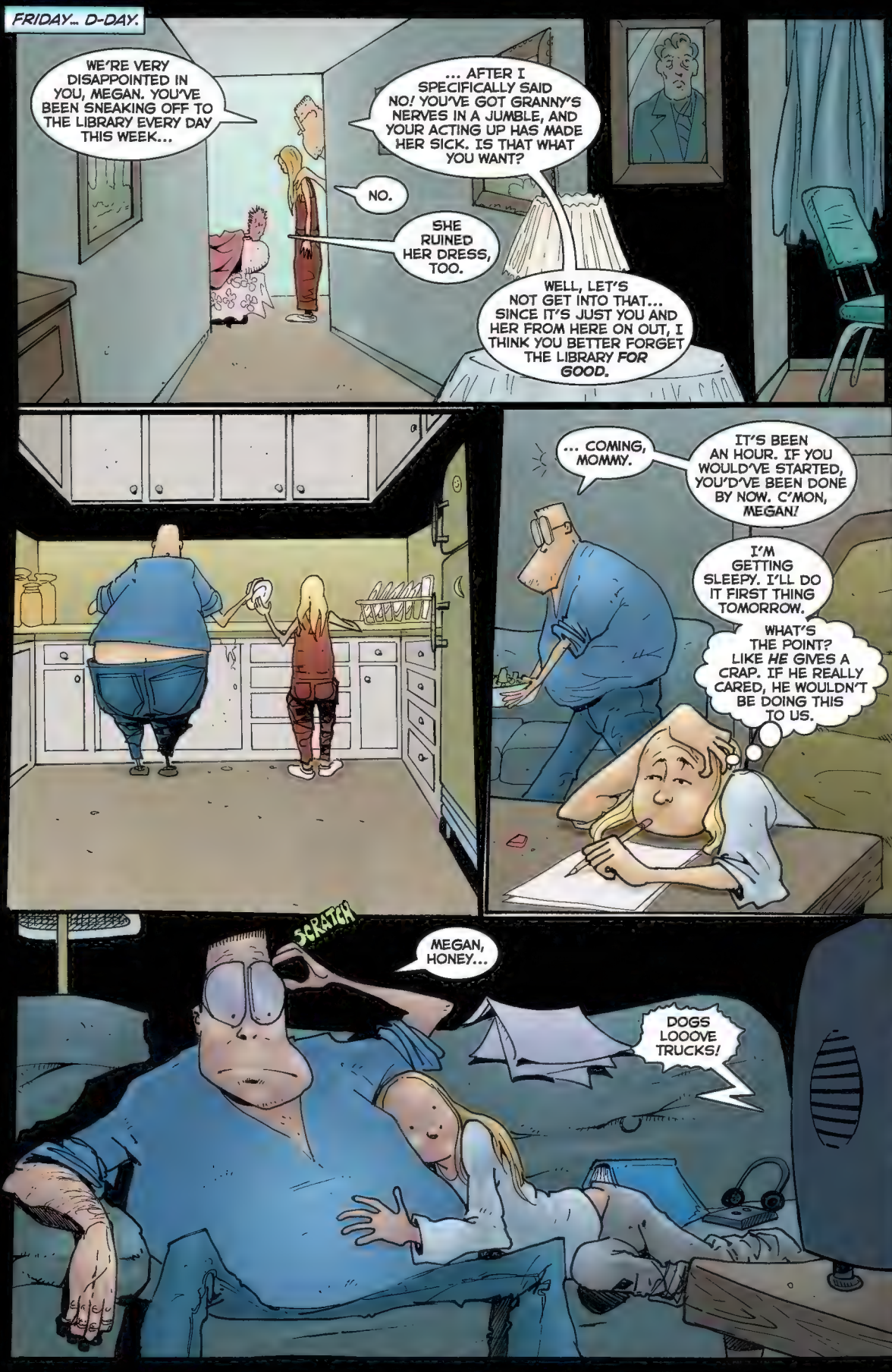

DESTINY.
I GUESS THIS IS MY DESTINY, TO SPEND THE REST OF MY LIFE HERE ON THIS BENCH.
ALL ALONE.
WITH NO WAY OUT.
NO OPTIONS.
NO HOPE.
NO...
PLOP
SCOOP!
IT'S A GIFT FROM ABOVE!
... AND MY WAY OUT!
OH WOW-- IT BELONGS TO HER!
SHE GAVE IT TO ME!
SHE KNOWS! SHE CAME THROUGH IN MY HOUR OF NEED! WHAT A FOXY SAINT!


OOPS.
BONK!
SORRY, BABE. YOU OK?
UH... ER, WELL... UH...
AND IN A HEART BEAT, SHE'S GONE.
THANK GOD SHE DIDN'T REMEMBER ME FROM OUTSIDE.
I'M READY TO ACCEPT IT NOW.
I'LL LIVE OUT THE REST OF MY LIFE HERE, ON THIS BENCH.
WELL, MAYBE IF I WAIT 'TIL CLOSING TIME, AND I'M THE LAST ONE OUT...
IN THE MORNING THEY'D FIND A MYSTERY STAIN ON THE BENCH.
I WONDER HOW THIS TUBE THING WORKS.

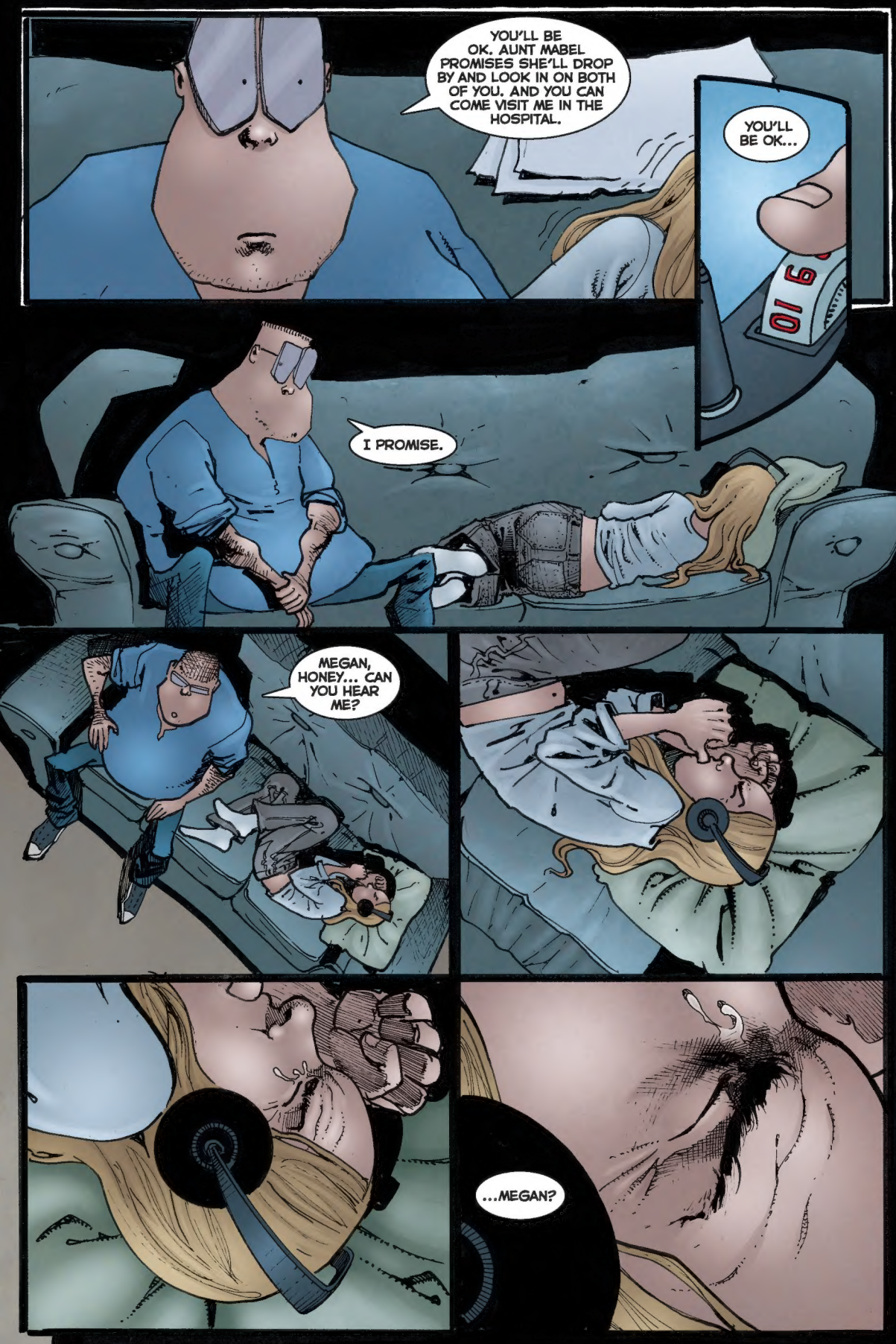

I THINK I KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE.
SNIFF, Y'DO?
UH HUH. COME WITH ME.
BUT THE BENCH--
SHHH, I KNOW. I PUT A BOOK OVER IT.
OH.
HERE-- MY SWEATER OUGHT TO DO THE TRICK. NOW STOP SQUIRMING.
SORRY...
N-P
I-M
CAN YOU SEE IT ?
NAW. RELAX. IT LOOKS FINE. BESIDES, IT'S A DARK SWEATER.
C'MON, LET'S MOVE.
OK. IT LOOKS CLEAR, LET'S GO.
WHERE?
TO GET YOU CLEANED UP.
BUT EVERYONE'S STARING AT ME.
NOT EVERYTHING'S ABOUT YOU, YOU KNOW.
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS IS ALL HAPPENING TO ME.
MY LIFE IS OVER.
NO, HONEY-- JUST YOUR DRESS.
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. NO ONE DOES.
UH HUH. KEEP WALKING.


HERE'S THE DEAL. PUT THIS INSIDE YOU AND TAKE IT OUT WHEN IT GETS FULL. OK, CONGRATULATIONS-- NOW YOU'RE A WOMAN.
IT'S N-NOT A JOKE.
NO, IT'S NOT. BUT YOU'RE NOT THE FIRST GIRL TO GO THROUGH THIS.
YOU SAY NO ONE UNDERSTANDS YOU. WELCOME TO THE CLUB.
PLEASE DON'T YELL AT ME.
YOU HATE ME, DON'T YOU?
WORRY IS MORE LIKE IT.
WAIT! BEFORE YOU GO,
WHY'D YOU...
... HELP ME...?
HONESTLY, MEGAN, WHAT MADE YOU THINK I WOULDN'T.

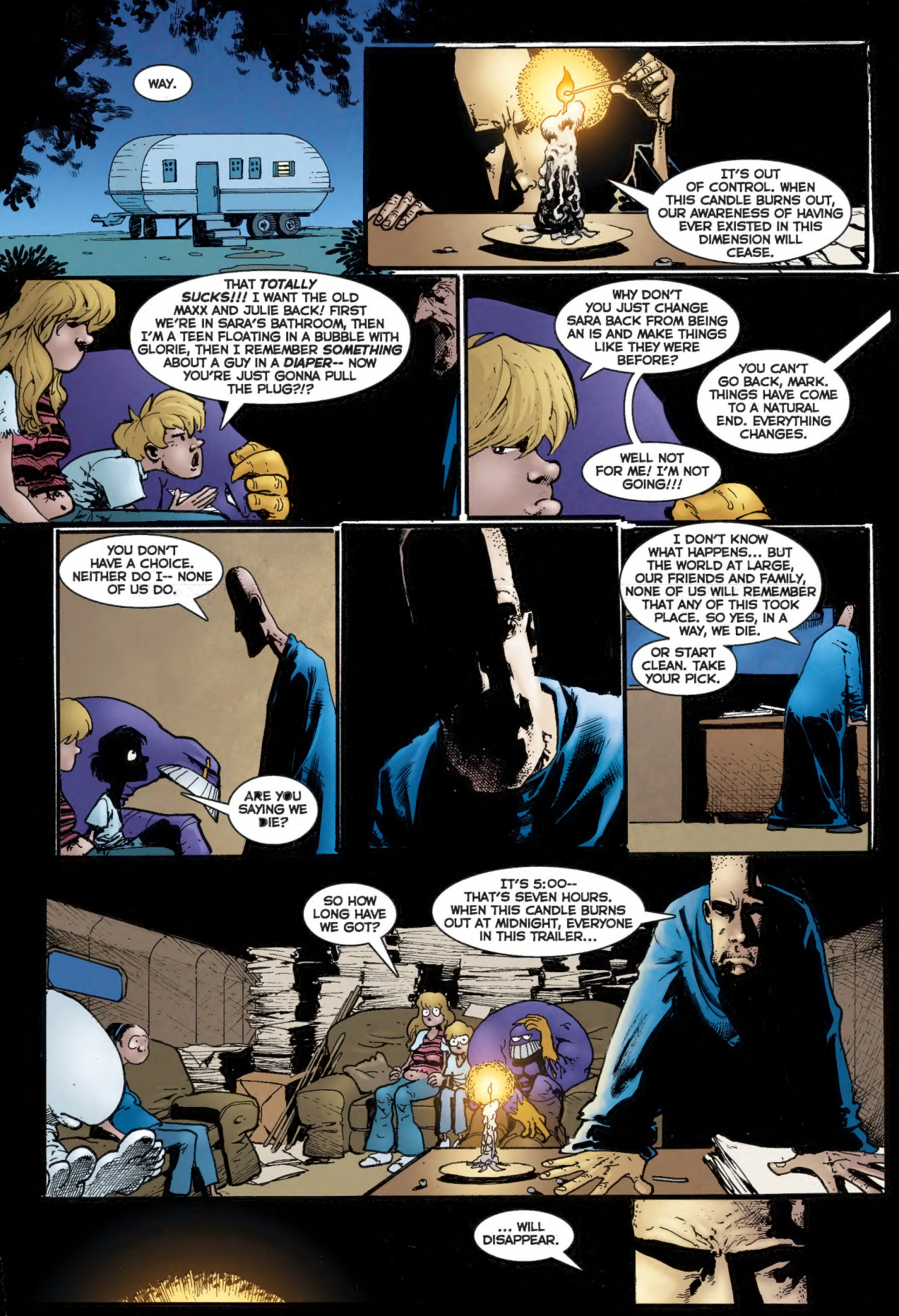

WOMAN!
THAT GIRL!
SHH! HERE SHE COMES.
EXCUSE ME, M'AM, BUT ME AN' MY FRIEND HERE FOUND A LIBRARY BOOK THAT BELONGS TO THAT GIRL.
YOU MEAN MEGAN?
WELL, NICE TO SEE YOU BOYS DOING SOMETHING CONSTRUCTIVE FOR A CHANGE.
WHATEVER. HER NAME'S WRITTEN IN IT.
OOPS.
WHAT'S THAT?
THUMP
UH... NOTHING YOU TWO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT. JUST SOME PAGES CUT OUT OF A MAGAZINE.
HEE HEE.
EXIT
MEGAN, WAIT! SHOOT! THERE SHE GOES. LOOK AT THESE PICTURES! I *KNEW* SHE WAS A "TROUBLED" GIRL.
SHE BOUGHT IT. WHAT A DUPE.


FRIDAY... D-DAY.
WE'RE VERY DISAPPOINTED IN YOU, MEGAN. YOU'VE BEEN SNEAKING OFF TO THE LIBRARY EVERY DAY THIS WEEK...
... AFTER I SPECIFICALLY SAID NO! YOU'VE GOT GRANNY'S NERVES IN A JUMBLE, AND YOUR ACTING UP HAS MADE HER SICK. IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT?
NO.
SHE RUINED HER DRESS, TOO.
WELL, LET'S NOT GET INTO THAT... SINCE IT'S JUST YOU AND HER FROM HERE ON OUT, I THINK YOU BETTER FORGET THE LIBRARY FOR GOOD.
... COMING, MOMMY.
IT'S BEEN AN HOUR. IF YOU WOULD'VE STARTED, YOU'D'VE BEEN DONE BY NOW. C'MON, MEGAN!
I'M GETTING SLEEPY. I'LL DO IT FIRST THING TOMORROW.
WHAT'S THE POINT? LIKE HE GIVES A CRAP. IF HE REALLY CARED, HE WOULDN'T BE DOING THIS TO US.
SCRATCH
MEGAN, HONEY...
DOGS LOOOVE TRUCKS!

WE GOTTA TALK.
I'M MOVING INTO ST.MARY'S TOMORROW FOR MY CHEMO, SO YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR GRANNY NOW. 'CAUSE I WON'T...
... BE ABLE TO.
BESIDES, THAT HOSPITAL FOOD'LL PROB'LY DO ME IN QUICKER THAN THE RADIATION! HEH HEH...


YOU'LL BE OK. AUNT MABEL PROMISES SHE'LL DROP BY AND LOOK IN ON BOTH OF YOU. AND YOU CAN COME VISIT ME IN THE HOSPITAL.
YOU'LL BE OK...
I PROMISE.
MEGAN, HONEY... CAN YOU HEAR ME?
...MEGAN?

RIGHT. AND YOU'RE *STILL* NOT MEGAN. WHATEVER.
WHY ARE WE TAKING SARA TO GONE'S HOUSE AGAIN?
TO CLEAR UP THIS NONSENSE ONCE AND FOR ALL.
STOP! STOP! I'M STUCK!!!
SARA? YOU OK, HONEY?
SHE WON'T BE OK 'TIL SHE'S RETURNED TO *YOUR* OUTBACK, WHERE SHE CAME FROM.
BUT FIRST WE GOTTA CHANGE HER BACK, RIGHT?
UH... SURE.
ALRIGHT, LET'S GO. HEY, ARTIE, YOU OK?
YEAH, JUST GONNA MISS THIS PLACE.
WELL IT'S NOT LIKE WE'RE NOT COMIN' BACK, RIGHT?
YEAH.
HEY GLORIE, YOU OK BACK THERE? NOT TOO CRAMPED, EH ?
VERY FUNNY. I FEEL LIKE I'M STUCK BETWEEN TWO GIANT BOOBS.
YOU ARE.
HEY, ARTIE! YOU'RE ACTING KINDA GLOOMY AND SERIOUS. IS EVERYTHING ALRIGHT?
ACTUALLY, MARK, NOTHING WILL EVER BE ALRIGHT AGAIN.
NO WAY.


WAY.
IT'S OUT OF CONTROL. WHEN THIS CANDLE BURNS OUT, OUR AWARENESS OF HAVING EVER EXISTED IN THIS DIMENSION WILL CEASE.
THAT *TOTALLY SUCKS!!!* I WANT THE OLD MAXX AND JULIE BACK! FIRST WE'RE IN SARA'S BATHROOM, THEN I'M A TEEN FLOATING IN A BUBBLE WITH GLORIE, THEN I REMEMBER *SOMETHING* ABOUT A GUY IN A *DIAPER*-- NOW YOU'RE JUST GONNA PULL THE PLUG?!?
WHY DON'T YOU JUST CHANGE SARA BACK FROM BEING AN IS AND MAKE THINGS LIKE THEY WERE BEFORE?
YOU CAN'T GO BACK, MARK. THINGS HAVE COME TO A NATURAL END. EVERYTHING CHANGES.
WELL NOT FOR ME! I'M NOT GOING!!!
YOU DON'T HAVE A CHOICE. NEITHER DO I-- NONE OF US DO.
ARE YOU SAYING WE DIE?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENS... BUT THE WORLD AT LARGE, OUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY, NONE OF US WILL REMEMBER THAT ANY OF THIS TOOK PLACE. SO YES, IN A WAY, WE DIE.
OR START CLEAN. TAKE YOUR PICK.
SO HOW LONG HAVE WE GOT?
IT'S 5:00-- THAT'S SEVEN HOURS. WHEN THIS CANDLE BURNS OUT AT MIDNIGHT, EVERYONE IN THIS TRAILER...
... WILL DISAPPEAR.